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DIALECTS OF ENGLISH IN COMPUTER GAMES

DIALEKTY ANGLIČTINY V POČÍTAČOVÝCH HRÁCH

BACHELOR'S THESIS

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Wolfram, W. (2006). American English: Dialects and variation (2nd ed.). Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishing.

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Abstrakt

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá analýzou anglických dialektů, které se objevují ve videohrách. Jejím cílem je analyzovat použití různých dialektů v sérii her Grand Theft Auto. Teoretická část je zaměřena na poskytnutí potřebných konceptů souvisejících se sociolingvistikou, rozmanitostí jazyka, dialekty, akcenty a herním průmyslem. Praktická část je zaměřena na jazykovou analýzu anglických dialektů, které se objevují v sérii her GTA. Tato analýza identifikuje dialekty postav ve hře z gramatické a fonetické perspektivy a vysvětluje důvody, které vedly tvůrce hry k výběru těchto dialektů.

Klíčová slova

Videohry, herní průmysl, dialekty, akcenty.

Abstract

This bachelor thesis deals with the analysis of the English dialects that appear in video games. Its aim is to analyze the use of different dialects in the Grand Theft Auto game series. The theoretical part is focused on providing the necessary concepts related to sociolinguistics, varieties of the language, dialects, accents, and game industry. The practical part is focused on the linguistic analysis of the English dialects that appear in the GTA game series. This analysis identifies game characters' dialects from a grammatical and phonological perspective and explains the reasons that led game developers to choose those dialects.

Key Words

Video games, computer games, video games industry, GTA, Grand Theft Auto, dialects, accents.

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Introduction

“Grave and thoughtful was her glance, as she looked on the king with cool pity in her eyes. Very fair was her face, and her long hair was like a river of gold. Slender and tall she was in her white robe girt with silver; but strong she seemed and stern as steel, a daughter of kings. Thus Aragorn for the first time in the full light of day beheld Éowyn, Lady of Rohan, and thought her fair, fair and cold, like a morning of pale spring that is not yet come to womanhood.”

- J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, p.672

Imagination is truly powerful tool that human possess. Reading these lines by J. R. R. Tolkien one can envision described characters. While reading, unique voice within readers heads narrates them the description of the events, places, characters, and using their imagination an image can be generated. However, each reader imagines the story differently. Although J.R.R Tolkien is brilliant and acknowledged wordsmith, whose works influenced and defined the development of the entire genre of high fantasy¹, each person creates unique pictures in their heads. However, authors spend an enormous amount of time to write a proper description to create desired atmosphere or share their thoughts, emotions, or perspective to help reader to understand what author wanted to say.

With the growth and development of technology, cinematography has evolved. As well as on the stage of a theatre, on the screen viewers are provided with the visual component of the story.

The invention of so called “talking pictures” or simply “talkies” was marked by the premier of “The Jazz Singer” on October 6, 1927. The whole industry was changing. (*The First Talkie – “The Jazz Singer”*, 2013). Since then, all American film studios desired to provide their movies with this newfangled feature.

At the beginning of the 80s, the first videogame which featured human voices was released by Disney. It was the iconic laserdisc arcade game “Dragon's Lair” in which the player becomes a “valiant knight” on a mission to rescue "the fair princess" from the clutches of “an evil dragon”. (Fleury, 2012). From that point voices in video games became a tool to deliver a story and describe a character. This thesis is aimed to examine dialects of the English language and their usage in computer games.

¹ High fantasy – or epic fantasy, is a subgenre of fantasy, defined by the epic nature of its setting or by the epic stature of its characters, themes, or plot.

1. Varieties of English

1.1 Sociolinguistics: variation and structure

“It begins with the simple act of noticing a variation – that there are two alternative ways of saying the same thing.”

William Labov, Quantitative Reasoning in Linguistics

Labov’s quote explains the nature of sociolinguistic variation in an understandable way: it consists of different sounds, words, and language that people use to explain the same concepts. These variants can be phonetic or lexical. Sociolinguistics is interested in examining all possible variants which are used and deemed in different social contexts.

Sociolinguistics is a branch of linguistics that studies language in connection with the social conditions of its existence. Social conditions should be understood as a complex of external circumstances in which a language functions and develops: a society of people using a given language, the social structure of this society, differences in age of native speakers, their social status, cultural and educational level, place of residence, as well as differences in their speech behavior based on the communication situation. Although some of linguistic features, which are called indicators, reflect a regular distribution over ethnic, socioeconomic, or age groups, they are used by each speaker in approximately same way in any context (Labov, 1972, p. 237).

In term of sociolinguistic structure, it is important to define sociolinguistic variables. According to William Labov, we may define sociolinguistic variable as “one of which is correlated with some nonlinguistic variable of the social context: of the speaker, the addressee, the audience, the settling, etc.” (Labov, 1972, p. 237). A simple example of a sociolinguistic variable is sound /r/ in New York City. The distribution of the variable may be studied in terms of whether a speaker deletes or pronounces the consonant /r/ in final or post-vocalic preconsonantal positions (for example in words like party, park, car etc.). Labov specifies the ideal sociolinguistic variable to be high in frequency, be an integral part of larger structures, have a certain immunity from conscious suppression, and be easily quantified on a linear scale. (Labov, 1966)

When categorizing sociolinguistic variables, we can emphasize three classifications which are as follows: indicators, markers, and stereotypes. According to Trudgill, linguistic features which speakers are aware of are defined as *salient*² and can be classed as markers or stereotypes.

² The salience of a variable linguistic feature, from a sociolinguistic point of view, relates to the level of awareness that speakers have of that variable, which in turn is connected to the social meanings that become attached to its variants. (Llamas, Watt, MacFarlane, 2016)

On the other hand, variables that are *non-salient* to the individual speaker or in the speech community are defined as indicators which only reflect variation among the different social classes but not stylistic variation. However, status of indicators can change over the time (Trudgill, 1986).

According to Labov “Indicators are linguistic features which are embedded in a social matrix, showing social differentiation by age or social group, but which show no pattern of style shifting and appear to have little evaluative force.”

1.2 Varieties of English

According to BBC article, The World Economy Forum estimates near 400 million people who have English as their first language while almost 1.5 billion around the world speak it (Lustig, 2018). The widespread use of the English language and its popularity throughout the world is attributed to the widespread colonization of the British Empire in the 18-19 centuries, as well as the political influence and economic dominance of the United States from the late nineteenth century to the present day. Needless to say, people who have English as their mother tongue and live in different countries (USA, UK, Canada, Malta, India, Australia, and Africa) differ significantly in pronunciation. The speakers also use a variety of words and grammatical structures.

When speaking about varieties of language there some main categories to mention such as dialects and accents.

Dialects can be defined as subforms of languages that are generally mutually intelligible (Schiffman, 1996). English speakers from different countries and regions use different accents (pronunciation systems), as well as various localized words and grammatical constructions. Based on these factors, plenty of different dialects can be distinguished.

Sometimes some dialects of English are difficult to understand, even for native speakers who absorb the vocabulary and grammar of their region from birth.

1.3 Dialects of English

There is a great awareness of language differences in the modern society that is why almost every individual is familiar with the term *dialect* (Wolfram, Schilling, 2016). Nevertheless, in my bachelor thesis I would like to use this term from the wider sociolinguistic perspective which might be quite different from its popular definition. John H. Bushman writes “Even though each person is likely to have a number of dialects. the concept of *dialect* is widely misunderstood.” (Bushman,

1989, p.54). It is highly believed that dialect is some sort of distortion or corruption of the “standard” language. If someone points out that a person speaking a dialect it is rather has a negative connotation and means that the speaker uses the wrong variant of a language. To understand term dialect correctly it is important to “become aware of and appreciate the variety of dialects as valid forms of language use.” (Bushman, 1989, p. 54). According to Wolfram and Schilling, term “dialect” is typically used by professional students of language as a neutral label in order to refer to any variety of a language that is shared by a group of speakers. Therefore, to speak language is “to speak some dialect of that language” (Wolfram, Schilling, 2016, p.2). Basically, there are no essentially “good” or “bad” dialects. Dialect is how we refer to any variety of language that characterizes a cluster of speakers within a language. (Wolfram, Schilling, 2016).

In essence, dialects are saying the same thing in different ways, or, in other words, dialects tend to differ not in the meanings that they express but in the realization of these meanings at other levels – in their grammar, in their vocabulary, in their phonology and their phonetics.

According to Millward and Hayes (2012), dialect variation is associated with:

- Geographic location (regional dialects)
 - national standard (e.g., American, Canadian, British, Australian and South African English),
 - particular area in a country (e.g., Northern American and Southern American English).
- Social context – speakers do not talk the same way to their fiancées or intimate friends as they talk to the waiter, or the paper boy or their employer.
- Education - e.g., more educated speakers less likely use double negatives.
- Occupation. - e.g., different meaning of the word *bugs* in computer engineering and pest control.
- Gender (sexual) – “women are far more likely than men to call a new house *adorable*” (Millward and Hayes, 2012. p.345).
- Age - teenagers slang and different phonology between older and younger speakers in the same geographical region.
- Ethnical origin of the speaker – non-native speakers may have different phonological characteristics or may use wrong grammatical constructions in English in basing on the grammar of their mother tongue. As Millward and Hates (2012, p.346) write, “Variations among nonnative dialects are usually the results of interference from the speaker’s first languages.”

Dialect variation of English according to the user can be identified as:

- Standard English (RP³, grammar, textbooks, dictionaries, etc.) – “Written Standard English is, with minor differences, primarily in spelling, the same the world over.” (Millward and Hayes, 2012). A standard language is a socially and culturally predominant variety of a language that is generally accepted as the most proper form of the language. (Millward and Hayes, 2012)

- National varieties (American, British, Australian, South African etc.) – according to Wolfram and Schilling, “Vocabulary is one of the most transparent ways in which dialects differ, and vocabulary studies are a common way in which dialect differences are profiled” (Wolfram, Schilling, 2016). For example, Americans use *elevators* to get to their *apartments*, when British people use *lifts* to get to their *flats*. Differences could also be in spelling of some words. For example, in American English it is “*color*”, “*analyze*” and “*traveler*” when in British English it is “*colour*”, “*analyse*” and “*traveller*”. Furthermore, there are huge differences in pronunciation as *park* /pɑ:k/, *horse* /hɔ:s/ in American English and *park* /pɑ:k/ and *horse* /hɔ:s/ in British English (it is important to say that here we are talking about standard accents – General American and General British, while there is a huge variety of each of them).

- Regional varieties (smaller areas – Southern American English, North American English in USA or e.g., Cockney, Scottish, Welsh, Irish, in UK) – As a matter of fact, what is considered standard in one area of the country may be different from the standard in another area of the same country. For example, in majority of southern states of the USA “y’all” is the standard second-person plural pronoun in speech, but not used in other parts of the country (Millward and Hayes, 2012).

- Social dialects (education, occupation, gender, race, family etc.) – “[..] social dialects are varieties associated with speakers belonging to a given demographic group (e.g., women versus men, or different social classes)” (Biber, 1995).

In my bachelor thesis I would like to describe some common English varieties because these dialects will be used for the further research in this bachelor thesis.

1.3.1 Southern American English

One of the most iconic and the most highly recognized regional dialect of American English is Southern American English (SAE). Figure 1 illustrates dialect areas of the United States, based on telephone survey data (Labov, Ash, Boberg, 2005). As shown in Figure 1, SAE is typical for Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, Arkansas, Louisiana, and a major part of Texas.

³ Received Pronunciation - the standard form of British English pronunciation, based on educated speech in southern England (Stevenson, A., Lindberg, C.A., 2010).

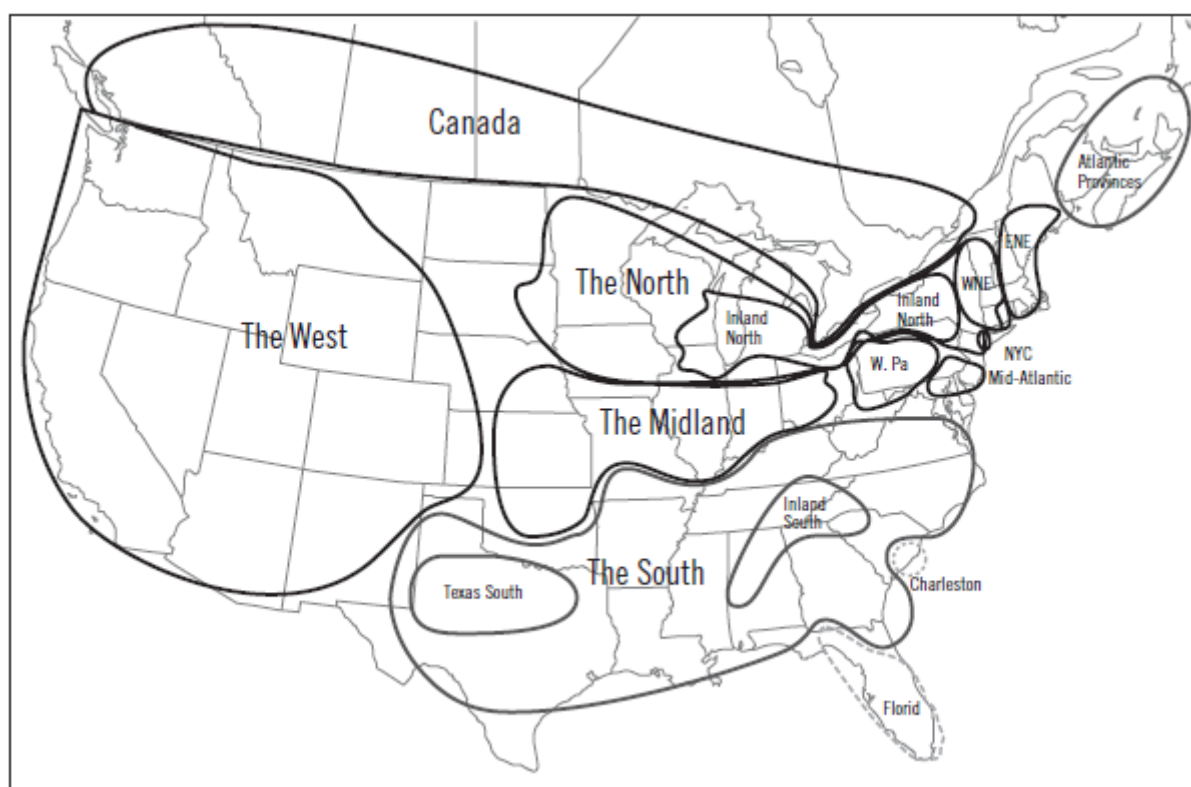


Figure 1. Dialect areas of the United States, based on telephone survey data (Bailey, Tillery, 2006)

Nevertheless, SAE is the most negatively evaluated regional dialect. According to the study of people beliefs about American varieties of English, Dennis Preston (1996) found that huge majority of his respondents recognized SAE as a distinct variety of American English and also evaluated SAE as the most “incorrect” one. Because of negative evaluation and wide recognition of SAE, its users may encounter practical consequences that in some situations include linguistic discrimination and negative stereotyping just as happens with African American Vernacular English (AAVE), or Ebonics that will also become a part of the research in this bachelor thesis. There are some stereotypes that relate to the SAE. For example, speaker with SAE may sound uneducated for a speaker with the North American English (NAE). Nevertheless, SAE almost never generates the extensive prejudice and extreme reactions that AAVE does very often. Users of SAE can anticipate polite (as well as not so polite) condescension to their dialect by people who are not from the South. SAE possesses low status outside of the South and influenced by standardizing forces such as universal education that threaten a lot of minority languages and dialects and interregional migration. But despite these factors, SAE is tended to persist (Bailey, Tillery, 2006).

Several grammatical differences between SAE and other varieties of American English are recognizable and well known. For example, as was mentioned before, majority of Americans

recognize *y'all* and *you-all* as distinctively Southern second person pronouns. Furthermore, a lot of Americans would also recognize *fixin' to* (in sentences like “I’m *fixin'* to go home.”) that represents a modification of English auxiliary system which in turn enables Southern people to “[...] encode an aspectual distinction grammatically that must be encoded lexically elsewhere (Bailey, Tillery, 2006, p. 13). “*I’m fixin'*” represents an intention to do something in the next little while. For example, “I’m *fixin'* to go home” means “I am intended to go home soon”. Another grammatical feature that is typical for SAE is using of double modals (e.g., *might could*) which is considered to be acceptable in SAE and serve to convey a meaning of lessened intensity reduced obligation (Wolfram, Schilling, 2016) or simply to sound more polite. Using of multiple modals in sentences provides speaker of SAE with a politeness strategy that is not available in other regional varieties (Bailey, Tillery, 2006). For example, a sentence “I *might could* go home” indicates that the speaker may be able to go home but is not quite sure about this ability. There is a particular grammatical pattern that allows to compose sentences with two (or even three) modals. The first modal in the sequence must be *may* or *might*, the second is usually *would*, *could*, *can*, *should*, *will* or *oughta*. Furthermore, SAE allow using of three modals in one sentence (e.g. *might should oughta*) (Bailey, Tillery, 2006). In addition, another grammatical feature is the use of completive *done* as an auxiliary verb between the subject and verb in the sentence indicating the past tense: “She *done* cleaned the room”. Indeed, there are also phonological features that distinguish SAE, but they are to be explained later as a part of an accent.

1.3.2 African American Vernacular English

African American Vernacular English (AAVE), Ebonics, Afro-American English, African American Language – all these labels refer to a group of dialects of English that developed among African American communities in the United States. (Wolfram & Schilling, 2016). As shown in Figure 2, which represents the density of African American population by county, the significant percentage of African Americans live in such states as Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, partly Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, partly Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, and in the East of Texas. It has cultural and historical justification.

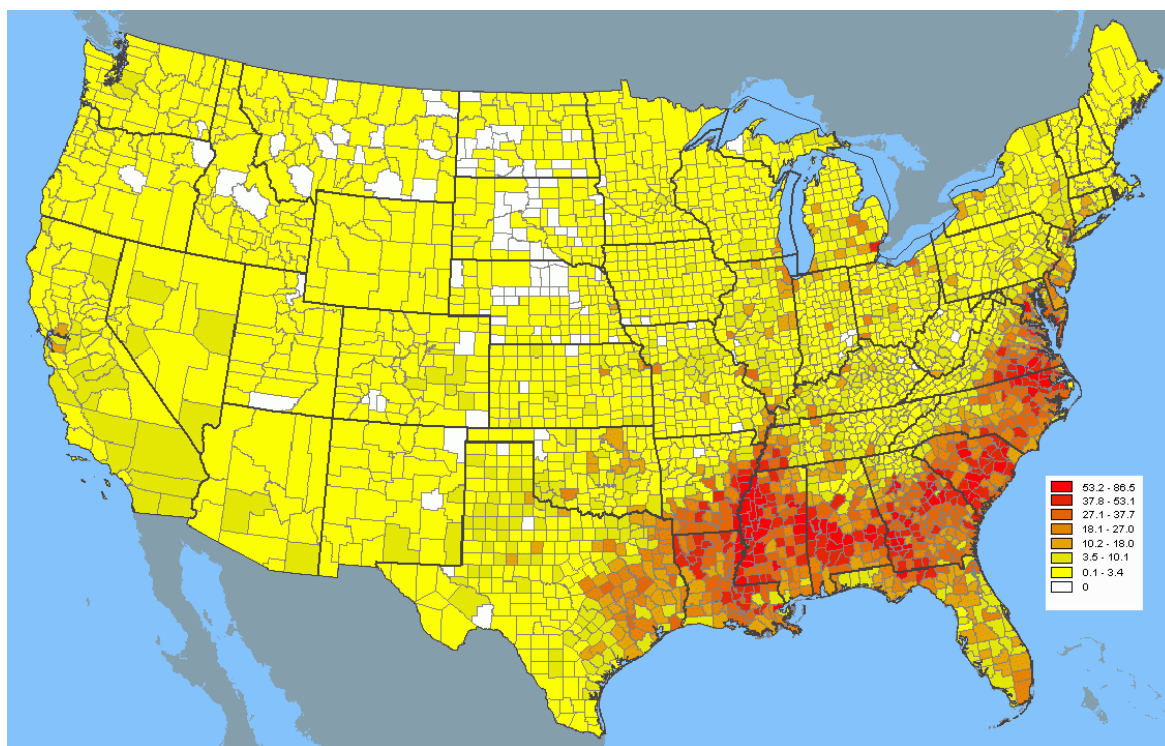


Figure 2. African American Population by County, 2000 (National Atlas, n.d.)

Enslaved African people were first brought to what is now the United States at the beginning of the 1600s. On August 20, 1619, 20 kidnapped Angolans arrived in the British colony of Jamestown (located in present-day Virginia) marking the beginning of almost 250 years of slavery in the USA (*First Enslaved Africans*, 2019). First, kidnapped African people had to survive the trans-Atlantic journey. When it was possible, slave traders separated kidnapped Africans speaking the same language. This was a common practice that was aimed at disrupting communications among captives to prevent a mutiny during the Atlantic crossing and possible uprisings thereafter (Baugh, 2006).

When enslaved Africans were put on the auction, they were subsequently denied access to literacy and schools by law. On the other hand, the vast majority of other immigrants, who moved to North America voluntarily without being enslaved, were exposed to Standard American English within their local public schools. (Baugh, 2006)

AAVE developed from contact between speakers of West African languages and their English-speaking slave masters or indentured servants. Africans who speak a great variety of West African languages such as Mandinka, Mende, and Gola – among many others – learned English after they were kidnapped from Africa and sold at an auction in North America. (Wolfram, Torbert, 2006). According to Wolfram and Schilling (2016), there are two main hypotheses about the origin and early development of African American Vernacular English.

The first hypothesis is that AAVE arose as a result of the slaves learning the dialectal English spoken by the indentured servants, who were poor and often not proficient in Standard English. This hypothesis maintains that earlier European American dialects have the same roots as AAVE. Even though slaves brought a variety of African languages with them, because of territorial isolation and constant contact with English-speaking indentured servants or masters, after several generations only a few traces of ancestral languages remained. This basically means that Africans learned the social and regional varieties of language from white speakers.

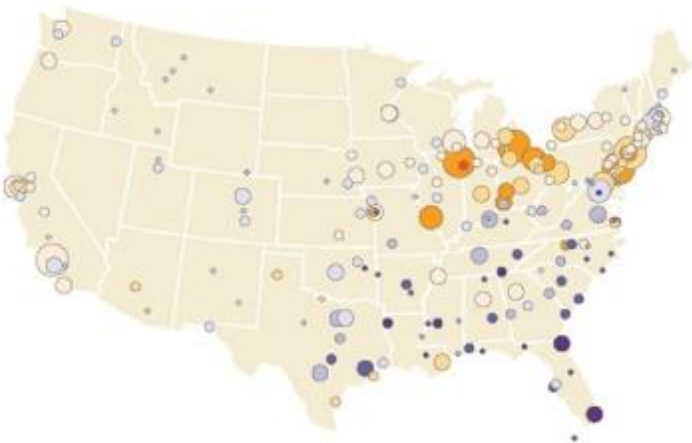
The other hypothesis is that AAVE developed as a *creole language*⁴ but then converged with Standard English. The supporters of this hypothesis maintain that creole that gives rise to AAVE was widespread in the pre-Civil War South and AAVE developed from this creole language that subsequently emerged during the early contact between Europeans and Africans. (Wolfram & Schilling, 2016).

According to Wolfram and Torbert (2006), the same as in studies of expatriate situations, isolation and the lack of everyday contact with outside groups may shed light on the history of the development of AAVE say researchers from North Carolina State University who re-examined the development of AAVE based on a specific set of historical circumstances, such as “...longstanding, enclave African American communities in geographically remote areas of the United States” (Wolfram, Torbert, 2006, p. 228). With African Americans having lived as a largely separate community, first under slavery, then under segregation, it is natural that they would develop their own enduring dialect and it also predictable that they would develop their own in-group expressions and idioms that were difficult for hostile outsiders to understand.

AAVE is non-standard variety of a language and there several reasons why AAVE established as an ethnically based and super-regional variety of English. The expanded mobility of African Americans in 20th century caused great migration of black population in USA which resulted in connecting speakers from different regions, enabling interregional language spread to take place. (Wolfram, Torbert, 2006). The great northward migration of the 20th century, which is shown in Figure 3, helped establish AAVE as an enduring dialect group throughout the country.

⁴ Creole language - A contact-based language in which the primary vocabulary of one language is superimposed upon a specially adapted grammatical structure composed primarily of the structures common in language contact situations. (Wolfram, Schilling, 2016, P. 396)

The First Great Migration:
1910-1940



The change in share of Blacks in cities is based on the percentage point difference in the percent of population that was Black in the later time period compared to the earlier. For example, 18.3 percent of the population in Gary, IN was Black in 1940 but was just 2.3 in 1910, which represented a 16.0 percentage-point change in the share of Blacks in the city. It was the largest change in share during the First Great Migration. By the end of the Second Great Migration, Newark, NJ had realized the largest increase in Black population share, with the Black proportion of the city rising from 10.6 in 1940 to 54.2 in 1970.

The Second Great Migration:
1940-1970

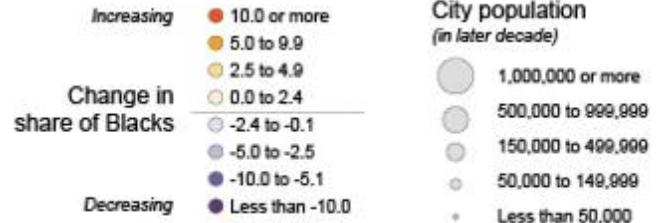
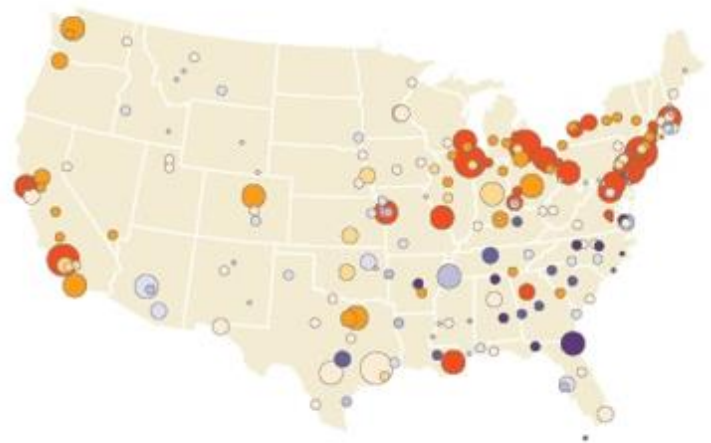


Figure 3. The Great Migration, 1910 to 1970 (United States Census Bureau, 2012)

Over the past fifty years, a sense of ethnic identity associated with AAVE has grown. It was supported through a large variety of social mechanisms such as community-based social networks. At the same time, stereotypical projections of African American speech in media have likely also played a role (Wolfram, Torbert, 2006).

Because of the innovative and expressive nature of these dialects, they are quite influential, and they are the source of many idioms and slang expressions that are used in Standard English or even international English around the world. this happened due to the widespread use of the dialect in cinematography and the music industry (rap, hip-hop, etc.).

AAVE is also associated with its vocabulary and slang. Some examples are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Examples of the vocabulary of AAVE

Example	Meaning	Example	Meaning
Beef	Conflict	Paper	Money
Strap	Gun, pistol	Crib	House
Diss	Disrespect	Whip, Ride	Car
Hood	Neighborhood	Smoke	Weed

Homeboy	Close friend	Can	Jail
Homie	Friend		

However, the vast majority of vocabulary is Standard English vocabulary, even though sometimes words are used slightly differently.

There are several typical grammatical differences between AAVE and Standard English and some other varieties of American English. They are highly recognizable and distinguish speakers of AAVE from the speakers of Standard English. However, some of these differences or features, either grammatical or phonological, could be observed in other language varieties in the USA. Certainly, there is a variation within AAVE based on region and generation, but there are some typical features that are unquestionably a part of AAVE.

There are a lot of differences in how verbs are used. Auxiliaries *are* and *is* are often left out: *He over there* (He is over there), *We kinda crazy* (We are kind of crazy). There are also two uses of *been*. Unstressed *been* is used like “have been” or “has been” in SE: *He been married for a long time*. On the other hand, the stressed pronunciation of *been* means that action occurred a long time ago or the action has been continuing for a long time: *She BEEN married* (She has been married for a long time) (Baugh, 2006).

According to Baugh (2006), habitual *be* is one of the most common features of AAVE. There are contexts in which speakers of AAVE use “*be*” when “*is*” or “*are*” would be used in Standard English. For example, as in sentences “He *be* sad”, “They *be* staying at home” or “We *be* playin’ games”. These sentences are not identical to Standard English “He *is* sad”, “They *are* staying at home”, and “We are playing games”. First of all, many speakers of AAVE tend to distinguish between temporary and habitual states of affairs. Therefore “He(’s) sad” and “He *be* sad” are not synonymous; the first one describes a temporary state of affairs when the second one describes a habitual state of sadness. Correspondingly, “They are staying at home” can describe a temporary state of affairs in contrast to “They stay at home”, which suggests a habitual event. Speakers of AAVE can effectively distinguish between “They(’re) staying at home” (as a temporary state) and “They *be* staying at home” (as a habitual state). Similarly, in “We *be* playin’ games” the verb “*be*” indicates habitual action. “We playin’ games” is also possible, but that just means “We *are* playing games (right now)” rather than habitually playing over an extended period of time (Baugh, 2006). Thus, the use of “*be*” is not a mistake or random choice. It is systematic and grammatically correct within the rules of AAVE. It is worth mentioning that “some African languages make similar ‘stative’ versus ‘habitual’ contrasts that [...] were integrated into the speech of slaves and their descendants.” (Baugh, 2006, p. 221).

Another linguistic feature of AAVE that deserves attention, is negation. This “linguistic illustration that is not exclusive to African Americans refers to standard versus nonstandard uses of *ain’t* and other forms of negative agreement.” (Baugh, 2006, p.221). The negative in AAVE is frequently expressed with “*ain’t*” (it *ain’t* good; he *ain’t* right) but not in all contexts. The negative form “*don’t*” is used in the present tense (regardless of person and number): “He *don’t* work here nomo’ ” which in standard English means “He *doesn’t* work here anymore”. It is also a double negation which is avoided in Standard English but quite typical for AAVE or other vernacular varieties of American English.

Contraction “*ain’t*” is used in Present Continuous in AAVE: “I *ain’t* even tryin’ to get all that.” which basically means “I am not interested in understanding what you are saying.”. In contrast to other non-standard varieties of English, speakers of African American Vernacular ‘English also use “*ain’t*” to express past tenses. For example, in the sentence “I *ain’t* do nothin’ ” *ain’t* represents that action was performed in the past, so for Standard English, it would be “I *didn’t* do anything.”. Even though “*ain’t*” is used in other varieties of American English, the type “in which *ain’t* corresponds with standard *didn’t*, has only been found in AAE.” (Wolfram, Schilling, 2016, p. 387) which defined this grammatical feature as typical for AAVE speakers.

It is important to say that person-number agreement between subject and verb, which is typical for Standard English varieties, is rare for AAVE. Therefore, another distinguishing feature of AAVE is the absence of suffix -s. First of all, it can be seen in verbs in the third person of the present tense: “He *walk*”, “She *talk*” as opposite to Standard English in which verbs in these sentences would have ‘s endings: “He *walks*” or “She *talks*”. The absence of the suffix -s can be also seen in possessives. Possession in AAVE tends to be shown only by syntax (with the ‘s ending removed): “I was at ma *Dad* house.”. Even though the word “Dad” has no ‘s ending, it is clear that “Dad” is one who possesses the house because it comes right before “house”. The same applies to the sentence “My *brother* book” which in Standard English would be “My brother’s book” where “brother” possesses the book which is shown by the -s ending (Baugh, 2006, p. 223). The suffix -s is sometimes also absent in plurals: “some dog” for “some dogs” (Wolfram, Schilling, 2016, p. 221). Another interesting example of this feature is the professional name of the famous American rapper Curtis James Jackson III whose stage name is 50 Cent.

All phonological features of AAVE are to be explained in one of the subsequent sections as a part of an accent.

1.3.3 The Cockney Dialect

Cockney is a variety of British English that is traditionally spoken by working class Londoners (Hughes, Trudgill, & Watt, 2012). Cockney is usually used to refer to anyone from East End of London. It is widely believed that “true” Cockney is considered to be someone who born within earshot of *Bow Bells* which is St. Mary-le-Bow church in East London (Espey, 2012). However, Cockney spreads to other parts of England, not just London. Figure 4 shows the spread of the Cockney dialect.



Figure 4. Dialects of the British Isles

“You see this creature with her kerbstone English: the English that will keep her in the gutter to the end of her days.”

Since Cockney is traditionally spoken by working-class, it was usually considered as a poor people accent. Therefore, there was a stereotype that Cockney speakers are poor and uneducated. In the play *Pygmalion* Eliza Doolittle, a poor flower-girl, represented Cockney working-class image. In his play G. B. Shaw shows fundamental division of classes, not only in terms of wealth, but also in terms of communication (Espey, 2012).

However, nowadays it is much more complicated than that; there are people working in very professional jobs who also might speak the Cockney dialect. Despite Cockneys are still depicted in the movies as working class, poor and uneducated people, or even criminals, the public opinion about Cockney speakers or the dialect itself is more favorable than in the past. There are a lot of brilliant actors who are originally Cockneys, for example Sir Michael Caine, Ray Winstone, or Danny Dyer. Since such figures became more prominent, class barriers which were defined by accent, began to break. (Espey, 2012).

There are some grammatical and lexical features that distinguish Cockney dialect from other varieties of British English.

First of all, the distinguishing grammatical feature of the Cockney Dialect is object pronoun that replace the possessive pronoun. For example, *me* is used instead of *my* in the sentences like: It's *me* brother (It is my brother).

Another feature of the Cockney dialect is negative forms. The negative form of the auxiliary *do* in third person singular would be *don't*. The negative form of the auxiliary *have* in the first person singular is *ain't* (Hughes, Trudgill, & Watt, 2012). *Ain't* is often used instead of *haven't*, *hasn't*, *isn't*, *aren't*, *doesn't*: I *ain't* dancing. There is a double negation in the Cockney dialect: I *ain't* got *none*, mate; I *ain't* got *no* friends.

Cockney Rhyming slang is a form of slang which uses rhyme, and it is originated in London's East End. It is widely believed that this slang has been developed as a sort of a code. Street traders or even criminals needed to communicate with each other in a way that prevent outsiders or law enforcement officers from understanding of what they were talking about (Espey, 2012).

This slang is developed by rhyming normal English words (that needed to be disguised) with other words or phrases. For example, if word *look* needs to be disguised, it will be rhymed with the word *hook*. The next step is to add an additional word that is not rhyming with the initial one. In this case this word is *Butcher's*. *Butcher's hook* means *look*: "Let's take a Butcher's hook"

(Let's take a look). Usually, to make it even more incomprehensible, the word that does not rhyme with the initial word, becomes the word used. In given example it is enough to say *Buthcer's*: Let's take a Buthcer's (Let's take a look). However, there are some cases when both words must be said: I don't Adam and Eve you! (I don't believe you). Thus, there are two different types. Some of them could be broken to just the first word of the phrase (Buther's, Barnet), but with others you must use the whole phrase (Adam and Eve). Table 2 shows several examples of the Cockney Rhyming slang.

Table 2. Words and phrases from the Cockney rhyming slang.

Cockney	Meaning	Example
Adam and Eve	believe	Would you Adam and Eve it? (Would you believe it?)
Apples and Pears	stairs	Get up the Apples and Pears . (Get up the stairs.)
Bread and Honey	money	Look at all this Bread and Honey . (Look at all this money.)
Baker's Dozen	cousin	I was talking to my Baker's Dozen . (I was talking to my cousin.)
Ball and Chalk	walk	Take a Ball and Chalk . (Take a walk.)
Barnet Fair	hair	When did you get your barnet trimmed? (When did you have your hair trimmed?)
Barney Rubble	trouble	We are in barney . (We are in trouble)
Boat Race	face	Take a look at your Boat Race . (Take a look at your face)
Brown Bread	dead	He's Brown Bread . (He's dead.)
Bubble Bath	laugh	Look at you, you're having a bubble . (Look at you, you're laughing)
Butcher's Hook	look	Come on, go have a butcher's . (Come on, go have a look.)
Chalk Farm	arm	My Chalk Farm really hurts. (My arm really hurts)
Daisy Roots	boots	Check out his new pair of daisies . (Check out his new pair of boots.)
Dog and Bone	phone	He's on that Dog and Bone all the time. (He's on the phone all the time.)
Pork Pie	lie	Are you telling me porkies ? (Are you lying to me?)
Plates of Meat	feet	Look at his big Plates of Meat . (Look at his big feet)
Rosey Lee	tea	Would you like a cup of Rosey ? (Would you like a cup of tea?)
Vera Lynn	skin	What happened to your Vera ? (What happened to your skin?)

However, Cockney dialect is famous for its phonological features, rather than grammatical and lexical. All phonological features of the Cockney dialect are to be explained in one of the subsequent sections as a part of an accent.

1.4 Accents of English

According to John Lyons, "Many linguists [...] subsume differences of accent under differences of dialect." (Lyons, 1981, p. 25). Generally, accent only refers to variations in pronunciation when dialect also cover particular variations in grammar and vocabulary (Lyons, 1981, p. 268). More precise term *accent* may be used instead of term *dialect* when the salient distinctions are only (or mostly) to be indicated in pronunciation.

In spite of the fact that semantics, vocabulary, grammar, and other characteristics of the language often vary simultaneously with accent, the term *accent* may refer specifically to the phonological differences in pronunciation while term *dialect* comprised of the broader set of linguistic differences. Frequently *accent* is a subset of *dialect*. Millward and Hayes write that in contrast to the *dialect*, which is applicable to linguistic variation of any type, the term *accent* refers to phonological differences only (Millward, Hayes, 2012). For example, to a non-native speaker's pronunciation of English which is influenced by the native language of the speaker (Russian accent, German accent, French accent). The term "accent" can also be used to refer to only one specific feature of pronunciation. You can talk about the American type of pronunciation and the American accent or, for example, about the Russian accent in English based on the stress, rhythm, intonation, and pronunciation of vowels and consonants. Differences at the grammatical, lexical, and phonetic levels together represent a dialect. Speakers of different dialects can have different accents, just as speakers of the same dialect have different types of pronunciation. The most famous example of this phenomenon is the Standard English dialect, which is used by educated people around the world, and which is represented by a large number of regional accents.

1.4.1 Southern American Accent

Phonological characteristics of SAE widely recognizable among the society. As instance, the merger of the vowel like *ten* /tɛn/ – *tin* /tɪn/, *pen* /pɛn/ – *pin* /pɪn/. In each pair of words vowel has the sound of the second word in pair: *ten* [tɪn] - *tin* [tɪn], *pen* [pɪn] - *pin* [pɪn]. Another

phonological feature of SAE is the loss of the offglide of the *i* diphthong in words like *ride* /raid/, *hide* /haid/ where diphthong /aɪ/ becomes a long vowel /a:/: ride [ra:d], hide [ha:d].

SAE could be also characterized by a series of vowel rotations that William Labov (1994) called the “Southern Shift” (Bailey & Tillery, 2006). Description of this shift requires a large technical phonetic explanation of SAE vowels. However, the majority of people can hear its most important feature by listening to Bill Clinton’s pronunciation of the vowel in words *way* or *stayed*. The beginning of the vowel (which is a diphthong in SAE) will sound something like the vowel in *father*. (Bailey & Tillery, 2006).

Even though, these vowel differences are hard to describe in non-technical way, they make people immediately recognizable as speakers of SAE – even before a *might could*, *fixin’ to*, or *y’all* crops up in their speech. (Bailey & Tillery, 2006).

1.4.2 African American Vernacular English Accent

AAVE also has a characteristic accent, or rather the range of accents that shares some common features

AAVE tend to be **R-less** at the end of the words: *sister* /'sɪstər/ becomes *sista* ['sɪstə]. In some varieties when *r* appears after *u* or *o* then *-r* reduced and the word ends in a [ɔ] door /dɔr/ → doo' [dɔ:], floor /flɔr/ → flo' [flɔ], your /jʊər/ → yo' [jɔ] (*African-American Vernacular English*, n.d.)

Some diphthongs become monophthongs (/aɪ/ → /a:/). For example, *my ride* (my car) /maɪ raɪd/ → [ma: ra:d]. Also, *my* might be pronounced with a /ə/ when unstressed: [mə]

There are some changes in /th/ sound: /θ/ and /ð/. Voiceless /θ/ is sometimes replaced with [f]: *bath* /bæθ/ becomes [bæf], *south* /saʊθ/ becomes [saʊf]; /θ/ also sometimes becomes [ʔ]: *with* /wɪθ/ becomes [wɪʔ]. Voiced /ð/ sometimes becomes [d] or [ɖ] (th-stopping): *that* /ðæt/ becomes [ɖæt] (*African-American Vernacular English*, n.d.).

Some consonants are silent (final consonant in consonant cluster): *past* /pæst/ becomes [pæs], *hand* /hænd/ becomes [hæn]; initial consonants are sometimes dropped in auxiliary *don't*: I don't know /aɪ doʊnt nəʊ/ → I 'on know [aɪ oʊn nəʊ]. (*African-American Vernacular English*, n.d.).

Some words have different stress. It can prevent reduction of Standard English: Police /pəˈliːs/ becomes [ˈpɒʊ.liːs] (*African-American Vernacular English*, n.d.).

Since AAVE is a group of dialects, its pronunciation by speakers may vary and depends on the age of the speaker and geographical region where the language variety is used.

1.4.3 Cockney Accent

Phonological characteristics of Cockney English could be easily recognized by other speakers of the varieties of British English.

There are some of the main features that distinguish Cockney speakers from RP speakers. First of all, there is a process named TH-Fronting (Hughes, Trudgill, & Watt, 2012). There are differences in pronunciation of /th/ sound. *Voiceless* /th/ (/θ/) is sounded as [f] regardless of its position in the word: [fɪn] “thin”, [breɪf] “breath”. On the other hand, when a *voiced* /th/ (/ð/) is final in a word or syllable, [v] is used: [ˈbɒvə] “bother”, [təˈɡeɪvə] “together” (Meier, 2010). But when that sound starts a word or syllable, the speaker of Cockney dialect use [d] or zero: [d] “the”, [eɪ] “they” (Hughes, Trudgill, & Watt, 2012).

Another important phonological feature of the Cockney dialect is H-dropping. The phoneme /h/ does not sound as phonetic [h]: “Hampstead” [æmstɪd], “house” [æːs], “hard” [ɑːd] (Meier, 2010). It is omitted in the words, but when it is present, it is usually in a stressed position (Hughes, Trudgill, & Watt, 2012).

T-Glottalization is a next phonological feature of the Cockney dialect. Cockney speakers often use glottal stop ([ʔ]) in their speech (Hughes, Trudgill, & Watt, 2012). According to Paul Meier (2010), when /t/ initiates a syllable, [t] is used, but when it is final in the syllable or word, then Cockney speakers use [ʔ]: “morality” [məɹæliʔəi], “put” [pʊʔ], “but” [bʌʔ], “got” [gɒʔ]; but “interesting” [ɪntɹəstɪn], “took” [tʊk], “gets” [ɡets].

Another phonological feature of the Cockney dialect is L-Vocalization. /l/ realized as vowel when: it occurs before a consonant in the same syllable (*milk*); it occurs as a syllable in itself (*table*); or when it occurs after a vowel (*hell*). Therefore: “milk” [mɪʊk], “table” [ˈtæɪbʊ], “hell” [hɛʊ] (Hughes, Trudgill, & Watt, 2012). However, a true /l/ is formed if the /l/ is in the

beginning of the word or if it is followed by another vowel: “likes” [laɪks], “frolic” [fɹɒlɪk]. (Meier, 2010)

G-Dropping is common phenomenon in the Cockney dialect. It denominates the replacement of the morpheme {ing} by {in}. Unstressed /ing/ endings in polysyllabic words are pronounced as [ɪn]: “working” [wɜ:kɪn], “deserving” [dɪzɜ:vɪn] (Meier, 2010). In the words like *anything*, *nothing* and so on, -ing endings may be pronounced as [ɪŋk]: “anything” [ɛnɪfɪŋk] (Hughes, Trudgill, & Watt, 2012).

Certain diphthongs are shifting in the Cockney dialect:

Diphthong /eɪ/ becomes /aɪ/:

- day /deɪ/ - [daɪ]
- mate /meɪt/ - [maɪʔ]

Diphthong /aɪ/ becomes /ɒɪ/:

- like /laɪk/ - [lɒɪk]
- lie /paɪ/ - [pɒɪ]

As a matter of fact, everything with regards to the pronunciation of certain words varies among cockney speakers. That depends on their age, geographical location, and social context. That is why some differences in pronunciation may occur.

2. Computer games

2.1 Modern computer games

Nowadays the gaming industry is moving forward. Thousands of games are released annually, hundreds of millions of copies are sold around the world, and the turnover is tens of billions of dollars. The most successful gaming projects raise hundreds of millions of dollars in sales. In 2019 the global market of the computer games was valued at USD 151.55 billion. (Mordor Intelligence).

It is important to understand that at present there is no big difference which platform player uses for playing games. There are some types of video games regarding to quality and budget:

- AAA (triple-A) - video games produced and distributed by a mid-sized or major publisher (e.g., EA Games, Ubisoft, Rockstar Games, Activision, etc.), typically having higher development and marketing budgets. (Steinberg, 2007).
- AA – video games produced and distributed by small or mid-sized publisher with lower development and marketing budgets.
- III (Triple-I) independently funded (“indie”) games that offers high production values in almost all areas (Lemme, 2016).

Nowadays there are some modern AAA games that are cross-platform⁵ which means that user can purchase the same video game for playing on PC or on games console like PlayStation, Xbox etc. (Stevenson, Lindberg 2010). However, there some games which developed exclusively for particular platform (PC, Xbox, PlayStation, Nintendo etc.) and they are called exclusives.

The term “video game genre” is a specific category which is similar to “film genre” or “literature genre” but applicable for computer games. Genre of the computer game is not defined by the setting of the story of the game, but by the way that player can interact with the game (Adams, 2013). In fact, computer game may not belong to one particular genre, it could be mixture of some. However, there are some common video game genres:

- Action games – mainly involve physical challenges. They require good motor-skills and coordination from the player. They could be full of different battles, fights or other contests.
- Shooter – a subgenre of action game, in which player participating combats against (or with) other players using different weapons.
- Fighting – a subgenre of action game which is simulation of the hand-to-hand combat between players.
- Survival – a subgenre of action game, in which the main mission is to survive. Players often has limited resources from the beginning and need to collect all necessary items.
- Adventure games – not that active as action games, they put fewer physical challenges on the player rather have intellectual challenges (riddles, puzzles) and involve exploration of the game world.
- Action-adventure is a video game genre that combines core elements from both the action game and adventure game genres.

⁵ Cross-platform - able to be used on different types of computers or with different software packages. Platform - a standard for the hardware of a computer system, determining what kinds of software it can run. (Stevenson, Lindberg 2010)

- Strategy – focus on gameplay requiring using of the tactical, strategic skills and often diplomatic skills.
- Sports games – simulate the playing of all types of traditional physical sports games.
- Racing games – players compete using some transport (cars, motorcycles, bikes etc.)

At some point, computer games became able to tell stories on an equal basis with movies or even books. Game development requires the work of screenwriters, voice actors, artists etc. The extraordinary thing that distinguishes computer games from movies or literature, is that players are not just a spectators, as when they watch movies or read novels, but they can literally get involved and participate in the process of storytelling.

2.2 Grand Theft Auto game series

For my bachelor thesis, I decided to analyze the use of different dialects of English in the famous game series Grand Theft Auto, because games from this franchise have a strong plot and involve a lot of voice actors which means using different varieties of the language.

Grand Theft Auto (GTA) is a widely known game series. Some adore these games, others are contemptuous. The franchise is praised for its witty satire and detailed cut of the eras in which its games unfold. Be that as it may, the game series has a rather controversial reputation. GTA has been accused of all possible sins. Some believe that the game provokes violence and encourages gamers to commit crimes, others accuse it of sexism, racism, and stereotyping. Nevertheless, GTA has had and continues to have a huge impact on the gaming industry and remains popular and demanded among gamers around the world.








Grand Theft Auto is a series of cross-platform action-adventure computer games created and developed by British development house Rockstar North (Red Dead Redemption, Max Payne, L.A. Noire, etc.) and published by Rockstar Games (Rockstar Games, n.d.a). This video game franchise is named after the term “grand theft auto” which is used in the US for motor vehicle theft. The very first game of the series was released in 1997. Nowadays, there are sixteen videogames in the Grand Theft Auto series including all expansion packs as shown in Table 1 (Rockstar Games, n.d.a).

All games in the GTA series are divided into three categories or fictional universes named after a graphic capability of each game – 2D, 3D, and HD (Rockstar Games, 2011). Table 1 also

shows this division of GTA games by the universe. It should be noted that in Table 3 pictures represent the game covers with the year in which the story unfolds.

It should also be noted that not all games are available for all platforms. Some of them, such as ‘GTA Advance’ or ‘GTA: Chinatown Wars’ were produced exclusively for a certain platform (PSP, Gameboy, Nintendo DS, etc.) whereas major games of the franchise (not expansions) are available on main gaming platforms (PC, Xbox, PlayStation).

Table 3. List of all games from GTA franchise (Rockstar Games, n.d.a)

Year	Title	Universe	Game Cover	Year	Title	Universe	Game Cover
Main Games							
1997	Grand Theft Auto	2D		2004	Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas	3D	
1999	Grand Theft Auto 2	2D		2008	Grand Theft Auto IV	HD	
2001	Grand Theft Auto III	3D		2013	Grand Theft Auto V	HD	
2002	Grand Theft Auto: Vice City	3D		2013	Grand Theft Auto Online	HD	
Expansion packs							
1999	Grand Theft Auto: London 1969	2D		2009	Grand Theft Auto IV: The Lost and Damned	HD	
1999	Grand Theft Auto: London 1961	2D		2009	Grand Theft Auto: The Ballad of Gay Tony	HD	

Handheld games							
2004	Grand Theft Auto Advance	3D		2006	Grand Theft Auto: Vice City Stories	3D	
2005	Grand Theft Auto: Liberty City Stories	3D		2009	Grand Theft Auto: Chinatown Wars	HD	

The gameplay is similar in every game of the series. In GTA the player becomes a criminal in a big city who is trying to climb up the career ladder in the world of organized crime. The player completes missions for various mob bosses or influential people in the city through the course of the game. The missions include assassinations, car thefts, sabotage, bank robberies, racings, and others. The gameplay focuses on an open world where a player has the freedom to do anything. A significant part of the gameplay involves driving and shooting, sometimes with stealth elements and role-playing. To finish the game the player needs to complete all story missions. However, there are a variety of independent side missions that expand the story and provide the player with new gaming experiences but are not bound with the main storyline.

The original Grand Theft Auto, which was released in 1997, with its expansions (GTA: London 1969 & GTA: London 1961), and its sequel (Grand Theft Auto 2), belong to the 2D universe. GTA games from the 2D universe have 2D computer graphics (two-dimensional models) and offer a player a top-down view as shown in Figure 5. In comparison with the more narrative-heavy games that would follow (3D and HD universes), these games have less focus on storytelling. The gameplay and game mechanics are quite similar for each game of the 2D universe. Every game has its own radio stations which player can turn on when entering a vehicle. There are only several cutscenes voiced by actors. The vast majority of all dialogues or mission descriptions in these games are implemented as subtitles.



Figure 5. Top-down perspective in Grand Theft Auto (Rockstar North, 1997)

In 2001 the GTA III was released and became the first 3D GTA game which in turn was the beginning of the 3D universe for the whole franchise. After this happened the world of video games has changed. GTA III was basically the first 3D open-world game with a third-person camera that offers a player a freedom of action (Stewart, 2021). The game was so successful that it set a whole direction in the gaming industry (Rockstar Games, n.d.b). It also inspired a lot of clones of the game over the years (Kumar, 2021). Figure 6 shows the significant improvement in the quality of graphics and level of details in comparison with previous games from the 2D universe.



Figure 6. Grand Theft Auto III game process (Rockstar North, 2001)

The story in GTA III took place in 2001 in a fictional City of Liberty (or simply Liberty City that based on New York) where a player plays a role of a silent criminal Claude who tries to take revenge on his ex-girlfriend who betrayed him and tried to kill him (Rockstar Games, n.d.b). Claude never said a single word in the whole game. There are several reasons for that. First of all, it was made to aid players in identifying with the protagonist for a better gaming experience. On the other hand, game developers simply did not know how to implement this feature because the game was innovative, and the developers were pioneers in many things (in other games at that time protagonists and NPCs ⁶ simply did not talk) (Rockstar Games, 2011). Thus, developers concentrated on other things like making NPCs talk to take the storytelling to a new, previously unknown, level.

The reason why Rockstar succeeded is quite simple. They took the project seriously and referenced classic movies, like *Goodfellas* by Martin Scorsese and *The Godfather* by Francis Coppola. They managed to make this game feel more like an epic interactive movie than “just” a video game. The incredibly high standard of voice acting played a major part in that (Rockstar Games, n.d.b). According to producer Dan Houser, recorded around eight thousand lines of dialogues which was revolutionary number for 2001 (Miller, 2012). The Rockstar ensured they hired recognizable voices from Hollywood in order to bring the script to life. The cast consisted of famous actors such as Frank Vincent (the star of *Goodfellas*, *The Sopranos*, *Raging Bull*, and other criminal movies), Michael Madsen (*Reservoir Dogs*, *Kill Bill*, and *The Hateful Eight*), Joe Pantoliano (*The Sopranos*, *The Matrix*, and *Memento*), and others (Zuniga, 2018). By doing so, the company revolutionized the gaming industry. GTA became so popular and profitable that many Hollywood action film veterans like Ray Liotta, Samuel L. Jackson, James Woods, Robert Loggia, Burton Leon Reynolds, and Jonah Hill have voiced foreground characters in different GTA games (IMDb, 2002; IMDb, 2004).

In 2002 the GTA: Vice City was released and became even more successful than its predecessor. The story in the game took place in 1986 in a fictional Vice City (based on Miami) (Stewart, 2021). The player takes on the role of an Italian-American wise guy (criminal) Tommy Vercetti (voiced by Ray Liotta who is best known for playing a main character in *Goodfellas*). Game developers decided to feature a protagonist with the voice in this game. Through the course of the game, Tommy tries to find out who framed him and to pay the debt to the boss of his crime family. Figure 7 shows the game process of the GTA: Vice City. The developers of the game managed to convey the specific atmosphere of the eighties with the help of an accurate depiction

⁶ NPC – Non-Playable Character

of the 80s retro style, an entertaining story, and of course the popular music of the time. They were inspired by famous movies like Scarface and Carlitos Way (both directed by Brian De Palma) and the TV series Miami Vice.



Figure 7. GTA: Vice City game process (Rockstar North, 2002)

The same as before, Rockstar hired a cast of famous actors to voice characters in the game. All voicing actors coped with the task making the story-telling more engaging and cinematic offering a large variety of different dialects and accents in order to better describe the characters and make them more alive (IMDb, 2002).

In 2004 the GTA: San Andreas was released. It offers a player an even bigger open world of the fictional state of San Andreas (based on the mix of California and Nevada) that consists of three fictional cities: Los Santos (based on Los Angeles), San Fierro (based on San Francisco), Las Venturas (Las Vegas) and countryside between them (Stewart, 2021). The story in the game took place in 1992 and the player takes on the role of African American gangster Carl "CJ" Johnson (voiced by American rapper Christopher Bellard or 'Young Maylay') who came back to Los Santos from Liberty City for his mom's funeral (Rockstar Games, n.d.c). The game developers accurately conveyed the style of the 90s on the West Coast. This game immerses the player in the life of street gangs (especially African American). A lot of famous African American rappers voiced different characters in the game (The Game, MC Eiht, Ice-T) along with African American actors (Samuel L. Jackson, Faizon Love, Clifton Powell) so the game has a large number of characters who are speakers of AAVE (IMDb, 2004). The game was a great success and is still popular nowadays. Figure 8 shows the game process of the GTA: San Andreas.



Figure 8. GTA: San Andreas game process (Rockstar North, 2004)

Nevertheless, for the recent games (GTA IV, GTA V – both from HD universe) the Rockstar choose to rely more on professional voice actors rather than Hollywood stars. Rockstar co-founder Dan Houser explained that the reasons for this decision are the ego of some Hollywood stars and player immersion. “We don’t bring in name actors anymore because of their egos and, most important of all, because we believe we get a better sense of immersion using talented actors whose voices you don’t recognize.” (As cited Goldberg, 2018). The Rockstar began to believe that if the player recognizes the voice of the actor and associates the game character with the actor it could disrupt developers' idea and vision of the character and prevent the full immersion in a story.

To summarize, Rockstar changed its attitude towards voicing the protagonist from a “mute” character, all the way to Hollywood stars and famous singers, and then settled with professional voice actors.

In the next chapter, I will analyze the use of different dialects of English and their impact on storytelling and perception of characters in games GTA: Vice City and GTA: San Andreas.

3. Dialects of English in computer games

3.1 Stereotyping

Since different dialects and accents generate certain stereotypes about the speaker, it is important to choose them wisely when “creating” characters in the computer game. It is not only

the appearance of the characters that creates opinion about them, but also what they say, and, more importantly, *how* they say it.

Just like in movies, in computer games players, while following the plot or just playing the multiplayer, can see cases of stereotyping gender, race, ethnic origin, age, occupation or social classes that is reflected in character's appearance, behavior, or the way they speak. Phonetic characteristics of the speech have huge impact on the perception of the character. For example, when players meet some character in the game who speaks a vernacular variety of English, they would probably associate this character with “redneck” and recall relevant stereotypes from their real life. That helps players to understand in-game characters better. Figure 2 illustrate an episode from a famous game The Witcher 3 when protagonist Herald meets some peasant in the village who asks, “Should I beat me wench once a week or oftener?” which means “Should I beat my woman once a week or more often?”. This line is associated with the stereotype about “rednecks” that they practice domestic violence. Basically, from phonological and grammatical features of the language variety, players can recognize character's class relevance and apply suitable stereotypes to create a right opinion about the character.

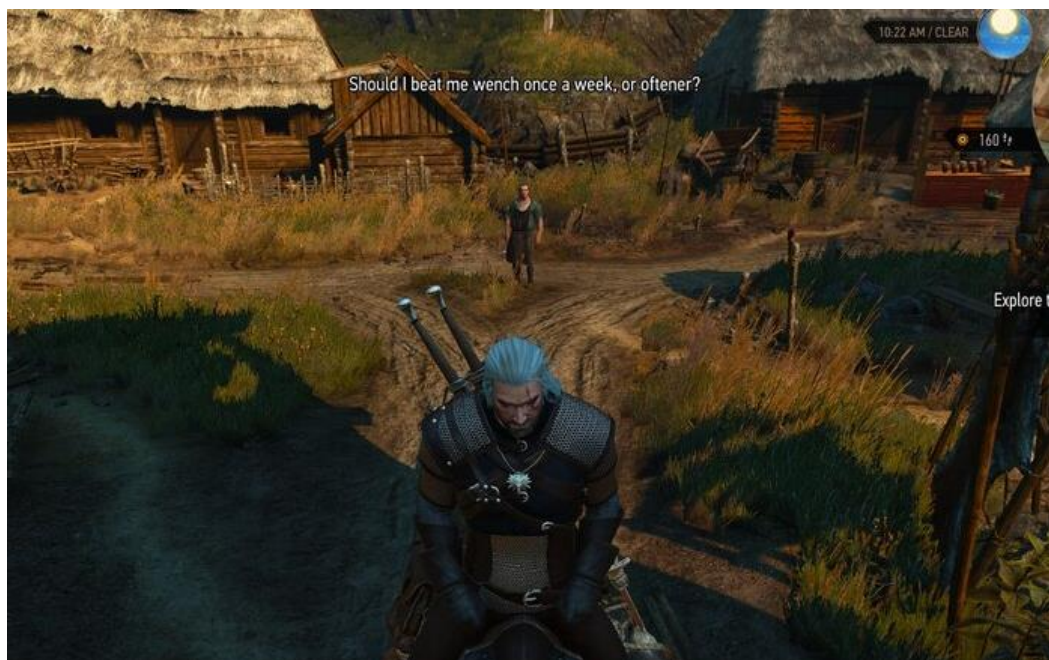


Figure 9. The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt game process (CD Projekt Red, 2015)

So, it is essential for game developers to create high quality dialogues and cast the right voice actors, who has or can imitate required phonetic and grammatical features for their roles.

3.2 Dialects of English in Grand Theft Auto game series

For my linguistic analysis of the English dialects that appear in the GTA game series I decided to focus on three iconic dialects: African American Vernacular English, Southern American English, and Cockney English. The reasons for that were personal interest and interesting characteristic features of each of the dialects.

Just like in movies, theatre, or real life, characters in games often have different accents or even speak different dialects. It is believed that such a variety of accents and dialects could help to improve the quality of the storytelling and providing full immersion in a story. Every accent or dialect associated with several stereotypes about its speakers. Thus, it could help the player to associate the game character with these stereotypes and better understand this character.

However, it also depends on the setting of the game. Some games do not need to feature language varieties because of their specific way of storytelling or focusing on other aspects of the game.

Anyway, some game developers refuse such solutions in favor of making the game more "accessible" around the world. Even when people from different countries may speak English, they still may have trouble understanding some varieties of English. That is why a lot of video games are localized (translated) into different languages.

It is also should be mentioned that given the setting, the game many profanities and is rated accordingly.

The next chapters provide linguistic analysis of the English dialects that I have chosen that appears in different GTA games

3.2.1 SAE in the GTA

In one of the missions in GTA: San Andreas protagonist meet some unfriendly country people who speak some vernacular variety of the English that might sound as some variety of Southern American English. In the game these characters are referred as "Hillybillies" (Rockstar North, 2004).



Figure 10. Encounter with the country people in *GTA: San Andreas* (Rockstar North, 2004)

HILLYBILLY: Take a gander at 'em fellas, is
that 'em?

HILLYBILLY: What'n tarnation? I'm a fixing to give ya a
whoopin' for what you gone and done to my young 'uns!

Analysis will be started from the vocabulary and grammatical features that characters use.

At first glance these speech might look as proper SAE: presence of words like *fixin*, *ya*, use of *gone* and *done* may indicate on some vernacular variety of SAE.

When analysis get to the step of evaluating phonological features, I concluded that these speakers have nothing familiar with SAE. Thus, it was a parody on “rednecks” with fake accents. The reason of why game developers created such a situation is probably for entertainment reasons.

As a result of quick analysis, I evaluate that at this part of the game there no characters who speak varieties of SAE. In the next chapter I will analyze AAVE in the *GTA: San Andreas*.

3.2.2 AAVE in the GTA

GTA: San Andreas features a lot of characters who are speakers of AAVE. The game tells a story about the life of street gangs. Therefore, there is a lot of description of a gangster’s lifestyle in the neighborhood.

The story unfolds around the protagonist Carl “CJ” Johnson whose speech will represent AAVE in the game. You got back home to his brother Sweet and sister Kendl when his mother died. Figure 11 shows the protagonist and his voicing actor.



Figure 11. Protagonist Carl "CJ" Johnson (left) from GTA: San Andreas and rapper who voiced him - Chris Bellard (right) (TeddyKGaming, 2013a)

In this chapter, I will analyze the dialect of the protagonist and demonstrate that he speaks the variety of AAVE based on his vocabulary, grammatical and phonological features. Subjects of analysis will be character’s lines from the in-game dialogs.

The following lines are said by the protagonist CJ who was voiced by American rapper Chris Bellard or “Young Maylay” (IMDb, 2004). They were selected because it is a typical way of character’s representation in the game (Rockstar North, 2004):

CJ: We been putting time in the hood, but we gotta get the homies back together, like the old days.

SWEET: GROVE IS KING! (Cheering up)

CJ: Man, I ain't never seen the Ballas roll that deep before.

KENDL: I think I found a way for us to get paid.

CJ: I ain't going to no college to study no accounting!

The analysis will be started with the vocabulary that CJ uses. First of all, there are some slang words that are typical for AAVE: *hood* (2.1), *homies* (2.2).

(2.1) *hood* as in *We been putting time in the **hood***. *Hood* is derived from “neighborhood”. It refers to the area in which a person lives or lived. In this case, it is the fictional neighborhood Grove Street (Rockstar North, 2004).

(2.2) *homies* as in *..we gotta get the **homies** back together*. *Homies* mean friends. In this case, *homies* refer to all friends from Grove Street (Rockstar North, 2004). In this example, modal *got to* reduced to *gotta* which is typical for AAVE.

There is also an instance of using the slang phrase: *roll that deep* (2.3).

(2.3) *roll deep* as in *...I ain't never seen the Ballas **roll that deep** before*. This phrase means to go somewhere with a big group of people – *I never seen the Ballas come in that large numbers before*. “The term *rolling deep* stems directly from the world of hardcore hip hop and gangsta rap” and in this case, it refers to another gang Ballas who came to a gang fight in large numbers. (“Roll deep”, n.d.; Rockstar North, 2004)

The next part of the analysis will deal with some grammatical features of AAVE.

First of all, there are several double negations that are typical for all varieties of AAVE: *I ain't never seen* (2.4), *I ain't going to no college to study no accounting!* (2.5).

(2.4) *I ain't never seen* as in ***I ain't never seen** the Ballas roll that deep before* is an example of double negation that often occurs in AAVE. In standard English, this sentence would be: *I never seen the Ballas roll that deep before*.

(2.5) *I ain't going to no college to study no accounting* is another example of double negation. In Standard English it would be *I am not going to study accounting at college*. It also fits with the stereotype about the lack of education of African American speakers of AAVE.

There is an instance of using an unstressed *been*: *We been putting time* (2.6).

(2.6) *We **been** putting time* as in *We **been** putting time in the hood*. In this example *been* is unstressed, therefore in Standard English it would be *have been*: *We have been putting time in a neighborhood*.

The next step is the analysis of phonological features.

TH-stopping occurs in word *the* (2.7), and [ʔ] occurs in the word *that* (2.8).

(2.7) *the* [d̥ ə] as in ...*time in **the** hood*..., ...*get **the** homies*..., ... *like the old days*..., and *seen **the** Ballas*... which is a typical transformation for voiced /ð/ in AAVE. In SE it would be / ði / or / ðə /.

(2.8) *that* [ʔ æ t] as in ...*roll **that** deep before*. It is not typical for voiced /ð/ to become a [ʔ]. It may occur as a product of linking words /roul / and / ðæt / resulting as [r o ʊ l ʔ æ t].

Realization of the -ing /ɪŋ/, as [ɪn] occurs in words *putting* (2.9), *going* (2.10), *accounting* (2.11) which is typical for AAVE.

(2.9) *putting* [p ʊ t ɪ n] as in *We been **putting** time*... which in SE would stay / pʊtɪŋ /

(2.10) *going* [g o ʊ ɪ n] as in *I ain't **going***... which in SE may stay / goʊɪŋ / or transform as well: / goʊɪn /

(2.11) *accounting* [ə 'k a ʊ n t ɪ n] as in ... *to study no **accounting**!* which in SE would stay / ə'kaʊntɪŋ /

Diphthong becomes monophthongs in word *time* (2.12).

(2.12) *time* [t aː m] as in *We been putting **time***... which in SE would stay / taim /

R is reduced at the end of the words *never* (2.13) and *before* (2.14).

(2.13) *never* [n ɛ v ə _] as in ...*I ain't never seen*... which in SE would be / nevər /

(2.14) *before* [bi.fɔː _] as in ...*roll that deep **before*** which in SE would be / bi'fɔr /. The stress moved from [ɔr] to [bi].

All changes that occur are summarized and compared in a Table 4:

Table 4. Summary of phonological features of AAVE in comparison with SE

Word	SE	AAVE
the	/ði/, /ðə/	[d̥ə]
that	/ðæt/	[ʔæt]
putting	/pʊtɪŋ/	[pʊtɪn]
going	/goʊɪŋ/, / goʊɪn /	[goʊɪn]

accounting	/ə'kaʊntɪŋ/	[ə'kaʊntɪn]
time	/taɪm/	[ta:m]
never	/nevər/	[nevə]
before	/ bɪ'fɔr /	[bɪ.fɔ: _]

As a result of the linguistic analysis, I conclude that the speaker's pronunciation fits the prototypical description of the AAVE with some exceptions (for example word *that* [ʔæt]). Speaker's pronunciation not always fits perfectly with typical phonological features of the given variety. It is important to remember, the AAVE is a group of dialects, and it depends in which geographical region variety of a language is spoken and what is the origin of a speaker. However, the phonology of any spoken variety of English is separate from English spelling, and every variety has somewhat different phonological rules that its speakers follow. Carl Johnson fits some stereotypes associated with the accent (poverty, lack of education, being a criminal). Chris Bellard succeeded in bringing "CJ" to life which resulted in creating an iconic and memorable protagonist within the whole GTA game series.

The plot of the GTA: San Andreas required a lot of African American speakers in the story. With a giving setting of ghetto and gangs – specifically, speakers of AAVE were needed due to the social context of the game characters. Game developers decided to hire AAVE speakers to voice game characters which helped them to create a believable atmosphere provide the full immersion in a story (Rockstar North, 2004).

3.2.3 Cockney dialect in the GTA

GTA: Vice City features a character named Kent Paul who is Cockney. This character was voiced by the famous British actor Danny Dyer (figure 12) who is a Cockney himself (IMDb, 2002).

For the first time, the player hears about Kent Paul from another game character Ken Rosenberg: "Ok, there's this *limey*, some *music industry slimeball*, goes by the name of Kent Paul." (Rockstar North, 2002). Limey in American English is "a slightly offensive word for a British person" ("Limey", n.d.) From these lines, it is obvious that Kent is an unpleasant Englishman who is in the music industry. Protagonist Tommy refers to him as "some English guy": "I'm looking for some English guy..." (Rockstar North, 2002). Afterward, the player meets Kent Paul who characterizes himself by the lines: "Kent Paul, mate. Yeah, I'm the guvnor 'round here. I sort things out, you know what I mean?" (Rockstar North, 2002). The player can also access the Vice City

Bureau of Investigation (an in-game government agency) Crime Tree Record where additional information about game characters could be found. In these records, Kent characterizes himself with the following lines: “Kent Paul. Paul from Kent. An Englishman in New York. Well, in Vice City to be precise... But certainly a fish out of water! Right, anyway, these yanks, right, what a bunch of pillocks. Stuff you learn in the mid-west, thanks mate, you can make a killing out here. I do all sort, I run a music business, I'm also a face in the underworld, so don't miss...” (Rockstar North, 2002).

The player can also access the website “Kent Paul's 80's Nostalgia Zone!” which is edited by Kent Paul. There the player can find more information about this character. Kent claims that in “1982 - Kent Paul is born. Me, Paulo, leaves East Kent for Florida and a crack at the big time. I'm a wide eyed little bleeder of 17. People begin to call me Kent Paul” (Rockstar North, 2002). This means that at the age of 17 he left the UK and moved to the USA. By “East Kent” he is referring to a Kent County in South East England which is next to the East End of London which explains the Cockney dialect he speaks.

In this chapter, I will analyze Kent Paul's dialect and demonstrate that he speaks Cockney based on its vocabulary, grammatical and phonological features. The subject of analysis will be Kent's lines from the in-game dialog.



Figure 12. Character Kent Paul (left) from GTA: Vice City and actor who voiced him - Danny Dyer (right) (TeddyKGaming, 2013b).

The following dialog was selected for the analysis because it represents the typical way of how the game character presents himself and it also has displays multiple features of the Cockney

dialect. This dialogue takes place between protagonist Tommy and Kent Paul (Rockstar North, 2002):

KENT: Alright mush, I'm gonna save your Vera, mate.

TOMMY: What the hell are you talking about?

KENT: You know that wanker Diaz, the Bugle Master. He's got your boy, Lance. Word is your mate tried to jump him...didn't jump high enough if you know what I mean.

TOMMY: Where did he take him? In plain English? (Tommy grabs Kent)

KENT: Keep your barnet on! They got him across town at the junkyard. (Tommy leaves)

KENT: Bloody hell...you nutter!

The analysis will be started with the vocabulary that Kent uses. The first thing that draws attention the use of Cockney rhyming slang (examples 3.1 and 3.2) which is a distinguishing feature of the Cockney dialect.

(3.1) *Vera* as in *I'm gonna save your Vera*. In Cockney rhyming slang *Vera Lynn* = *Vera* = skin or cigarette paper (Cockney Rhyming Slang, n.d.). In this case, *Vera* stands for the *skin*. Therefore, *I'm gonna save your Vera* means *I am going to save your skin* – an idiom that means to “save somebody or yourself from a dangerous or unpleasant situation” (*Save your skin*, n.d.). A colloquial speech could be noticed in the use of *gonna* instead of *going to*.

(3.2) *Barnet* as in *Keep your barnet on!* In Cockney rhyming slang *Barnet Fair* = *Barnet* = hair (Cockney Rhyming Slang, n.d.). There is an expression in Cockney dialect: *Keep yer 'air/wig on!* (Keep your hair/wig on!) which means “Calm down!” (Cockney dictionary, n.d.). Therefore, “*Keep your barnet on!*” means “*Keep your hair on!*” or “Calm down!”.

Additionally, there are several words and expressions typical for Cockney's vocabulary (examples 3.3 and 3.4) or for British English (examples 3.5 and 3.6) and some slang expressions (example 3.7) that make Kent a more believable and livelier character.

(3.3) *Mush* as in *Alright, mush* means is a typical address to a male in Cockney dialect (Cockney dictionary, n.d.).

(3.4) *if you know what I mean* - In conversations Cockney speakers often ask for understanding by the different variations of the phrase “Do you know what I mean?” (Williams, 2015) which was displayed s dialogue.

(3.5) *Bloody hell* – stereotypical interjection in British English that is used to express anger, therefore shock, or surprise (*Bloody hell*, n.d.).

(3.6) *You nutter* – slang expression in British English that is used to refer to someone who is insane, psychotic, or acting like one. Barely used in American English (Nutter, n.d.).

(3.7) *Jump him* as in *Word is your mate tried to jump him...didn't jump high enough if you know what I mean*. In British slang, this expression means a willingness to have sexual intercourse with the person (Jump, n.d.b). However, it is usually used “more in the figurative sense, rather than literal.” (Jump, n.d.a). Therefore, in this case, *jump him* should be understood as *f-word him* meaning *kill him*. Thus, *didn't jump high enough* means that he was not strong enough or simply failed to kill him. This expression also occurs in North American slang.

The next step is an analysis of phonological features. There are several examples of **L-Vocalization**, **T-Glottalization**, **H-Dropping**, **TH-Fronting**, and some other vowels shift.

L-Vocalization could be noticed in words *alright* (3.8) and *hell* (3.9)

(3.8) *Alright* [ɔ̯ ʊ^w a ɪ ʔ] as in **Alright**, *mush* which in RP would be /ɔ:l'raɪt/

(3.9) *hell* [h ɛ ʊ] as in *Bloody hell* which in RP would be /hɛl/. There is no H dropping in this case because /h/ is preceded by vowel.

Several examples of **T-Glottalization** could be observed in, *mate* (3.10), *that* (3.11), *got* (3.12), and *alright* (3.13).

(3.10) *mate* [m ʌ ɪ ʔ] as in *I'm gonna save your Vera*, **mate** and *Word is your mate tried to jump him* which in RP would be /mɛɪt/. There is also a diphthong shift: /eɪ/ becomes /ʌɪ/ which does not actually fit the prototypical description of Cockney since /eɪ/ → /aɪ/ shift is expected.

(3.11) *that* [æ ʔ] as in *You know that wanker Diaz* which in RP would be /ðæt/

(3.12) *got* [g ɒ ʔ] as in *He's got your boy* and *They got him across town at the junkyard* which in RP would be /gɒt/

(3.13) *Alright* [ɔ̯ ʊ^w a ɪ ʔ] as in **Alright**, *mush* which in RP would be /ɔ:l'raɪt/

H-dropping could be observed in words *He's* (3.14), *him* (3.15), *high* (3.16).

(3.14) *He's* [ə ɪ z] as in **He's** got your boy which in RP would be / hi:z /

(3.15) *him* [ɪ m] as in *They got **him** across town at the junkyard* which in RP would be / hɪm /. As a matter of fact, *got* [gɒʔ] *him* [ɪm] instead of being pronounced separately as [gɒʔ ɪm] merges into one word: [g ɒ ʔ ɪ m]. In RP when /h/ is in this position, it is dropped as well. It would be / ɡɒtəm /

(3.16) *high* [ɒ ɪ] as in *didn't jump **high** enough* which in RP would be / haɪ /. In this case diphthong shift: /aɪ/ → /ɔɪ/ might be expected but the speaker's pronunciation not always must fit the prototypical description of Cockney

TH-Fronting has occurred in words *that* (3.17), *they* (3.18). These examples do not demonstrate classical **TH-Fronting** when [θ] becomes [f] and [ð] becomes [v], but some exceptions, when Cockney speakers use zero sound.

(3.17) *that* [æ ʔ] as in *You know **that** wanker Diaz* which in RP would be / ðæt /

(3.18) *They* [e ɪ] as in **They** got him across town at the junkyard which in RP would be / ðeɪ /

An example of **TH-stopping** occurs in the word *the* (3.19) where replacing the dental fricative with a plosive could be observed.

(3.19) *the* [d] as in *..**the** Bugle Master* and *They got him across town at **the** junkyard* which in RP would be / ðə /

There are also instances of other vowels shift in *I'm* (3.20), *You* (3.21), *to* (3.22), *enough* (3.23).

(3.20) *I'm* [ɑ ɪ m] as in **I'm** gonna save your Vera which in RP would be / aɪm /

(3.21) *You* [j ʊ] as in **You** know that wanker Diaz and ...**you** nutter which in RP would be / ju: /. In the sentence *if **you** know what I mean* in RP *you* would be / jə /

(3.22) *to* [t ə] as in *Word is your mate tried **to** jump him* which in RP would be / tu: /

(3.23) *enough* [ɪ_n æ f] as in ...*didn't jump high enough* which in RP would be /ɪ'nʌf/

Typical for Cockney speakers *know what I mean* (3.24) also merges into one word.

(3.24) *know what I mean* [n ɑ: ʔ ə m i: n] as in ...*if you know what I mean* which in RP would be /nəʊ wɒt aɪ mi:n/

All changes that occur are summarized and compared in a Table 5:

Table 5. Summary of phonological features of Cockney dialect in comparison with Received Pronunciation.

Word or expression	RP	Cockney
alright	/ɔ:l'raɪt/	[ɔ ʊ ɹ ^w aɪ ʔ]
hell	/hɛl/	[h ɛ ʊ]
mate	/meɪt/	[m ʌɪ ʔ]
got	/gɒt/	[g ɒ ʔ]
he's	/hi:z/	[əɪ z]
him	/hɪm/	[ɪ m]
high	/haɪ/	[ɒɪ]
that	/ðæt/	[æ ʔ]
they	/ðeɪ/	[eɪ]
the	/ði:/	[d]
I'm	/aɪm/	[ɑɪ m]
you	/ju:/, /jə/	[j ʊ]
your	/jɔ:/	[j ə]
to	/tu:/	[t ə]
enough	/ɪ'nʌf/	[ɪ n æ f]
got him	/gɒtəm/	[g ɒ ʔɪ m]
know what I mean	/nəʊ wɒt aɪ mi:n/	[n ɑ: ʔ ə m i: n]

As a result of the linguistic analysis, I conclude that the speaker's pronunciation almost always fits the prototypical description of the Cockney dialect with several exceptions. For example, in words *mate* (/eɪ/ → /ʌɪ/ shift occurs when /eɪ/ → /aɪ/ is expected) or *high* (/aɪ/ → /ɒɪ/ shift occurs when /aɪ/ → /ɔɪ/). The reason for this phenomenon is that pronunciation of each speaker is highly depends on age, social context, and geographical location.

There is a common stereotype that Americans have trouble understanding varieties of British English. In the GTA: Vice City this stereotype is also mentioned. For example, in the dialogue above protagonist Tommy, who is obviously not familiar with the vocabulary of the Cockney dialect or its phonological features, struggles to understand what Kent is saying and does not know how to respond: *What the hell are you talking about?* Tommy is also asking Kent to answer *in plain English*, meaning preferably in American English without using words and expressions that are typical for the Cockney dialect. Not only do game characters have trouble understanding Cockney or other varieties of British English in this game, but some of the players too. In one of the game-related forums named “GTAForums”, there is a topic created by a user Cap’nCarJack (2002) who is asking if he is “the only American who cannot understand a SINGLE word Kent Paul [...] says?” According to answers, some American players struggle to understand Cockney dialect (Cap’nCarJack, 2002). Additionally, even speakers of British English may have trouble understanding the distinctive vocabulary of this variety. At that point, players who have trouble understanding the Cockney dialect may feel the way same the protagonist does. Basing on the plot, game developers needed Kent Paul, who is a criminal, to be a sneaky, selfish, and untrustworthy liar from the UK. Proper RP would not fit this kind of a character, because of the American stereotype that villains with a British accent are brilliant and sophisticated. On the other hand, characters with a Cockney accent would be more likely perceived as scamps rather than negative characters (Lane, 2019). That is why Kent Paul became a Cockney in the game. He turned out to be a colorful and memorable character.

The fact that Danny Dyer is a Cockney speaker helped him to bring the game character to life. The reason is that he just was himself speaking a Cockney dialect instead of performing a Cockney accent. Therefore, game developers, scriptwriters, and voicing actors succeed in creating a lively character (Kent Paul) who is fitting mentioned stereotypes which complement the character and provide the full immersion in a story.

Conclusion

The aim of this thesis is to analyze the various dialogues of the English language that appear in the GTA game series. For the analysis, I prepared a theoretical part, which includes the necessary concepts about sociolinguistics, language varieties, dialects and accents, general information about the GTA game franchise, as well as grammatical, lexical, and phonetic features of such accents as Southern American English, African American Vernacular English, and Cockney dialect.

I also identified how stereotypes associated with a character's accent affect his perception by the player and how this affects the gameplay and storytelling in general. The practical part consists of a linguistic analysis of the dialects that appear in the GTA games series. After conducting a linguistic analysis based on the prepared information, I came to the conclusion that such dialects of the English language as AAVE and Cockney are present in the game.

I also found out that the typical characteristics of a certain variety of the language will not always correspond to the real pronunciation of individual speakers.

The reason why some phonological features of the speakers do not fit the prototypical description of the dialect is often due to the fact that the pronunciation of each speaker highly depends on age, social context, and geographical location. I also conclude that due to existing stereotypes in society, correctly selected and performed dialects improve the quality of storytelling and provide a full immersion into the story.

Rozšířený abstrakt

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá analýzou anglických dialektů, které se objevují ve videohrách. Jejím cílem je analyzovat použití různých dialektů v sérii her Grand Theft Auto. Úvod popisuje vývoj hlasového doprovodu ve hrách. Od pouze psaných knih přes němý film až po mluvený komentář ve hře.

Teoretická část je zaměřena na poskytnutí potřebných konceptů souvisejících se sociolingvistikou, rozmanitostí jazyka, dialekty, akcenty a herním průmyslem.

Na začátek byl v teoretické části vysvětlen pojem sociolingvistika. Sociolingvistika je obor lingvistiky, která zkoumá jazyk z hlediska jeho fungování ve společnosti. Bylo uvedeno, že ve světě existuje mnoho různých druhů angličtiny. V návaznosti na tyto jazykové variace je nutno zmínit dvě hlavní kategorie, kterými jsou dialekty a akcenty. Pojem dialekt je popsán z širokého sociolingvistického hlediska jako neutrální označení pro jakoukoliv variaci jazyka, která se šíří mezi mluvčími. V závislosti na mluvčím mohou být varianty dialektu rozděleny na standardní, národní nebo regionální. Byly definovány dialekty jihoamerické, afroamerické a dialekt Cockney. Dále byly popsány gramatické, lexikální a fonetické vlastnosti každého dialektu. V neposlední řadě byl zkráceně popsán herní průmysl moderní doby a vývoj série Grand Theft Auto od začátku včetně dějů v jednotlivých dílech.

Praktická část je zaměřena na jazykovou analýzu anglických dialektů, které se objevují v sérii her GTA. Tato analýza identifikuje dialekty postav ve hře z gramatické a fonologické perspektivy a vysvětluje důvody, které vedly tvůrce hry k výběru těchto dialektů. Jako první jsou popsány jednotlivé postavy a jejich příběhy. Jsou uvedeni také herci, kteří postavy pro hru nadabovali. Analýza pak probíhala ve třech fázích. První vymezuje slovní zásobu dialektu, kterým daná postava hovoří. Druhá fáze analýzy se soustředí na gramatickou stránku dialektu. Třetí a poslední fáze analýzy je zaměřena na fonetickou část dialektu. Následuje porovnání, zda dialekt užívaný daným mluvčím odpovídá základnímu jazykovému standartu. Na závěr byl poskytnut komentář k tématu.

Byly poskytnuty potřebné informace týkající se sociolingvistických pojmů a informace z oblasti herního průmyslu. Na základě toho byla provedena analýza dialektů v počítačové hře GTA.

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